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December 27, 2013

CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
ON THE
EXPANDED ENVIRONMENTAL NOTIFICATION FORM

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| PROJECT NAME | : Silver Line Gateway |
| PROJECT MUNICIPALITY | : Chelsea and Boston |
| PROJECT WATERSHED | : Boston Harbor |
| EEA NUMBER | : 15124 |
| PROJECT PROPONENT | : Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) |
| DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR | : November 20, 2013 |

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) (M.G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62I) and Section 11.06 of the MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), I hereby determine that this project **requires** the preparation of a mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Pursuant to 301 CMR 11.11, MassDOT has requested that I allow the submission of a Single EIR, rather than a Draft and Final EIR. MassDOT should submit a Single EIR in accordance with the limited Scope contained in this Certificate.

Project Description

The project entails the extension of the Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service from South Station in Boston to East Boston and Chelsea along a corridor covering 24.94 acres. The project will require new construction in Chelsea extending from the Massachusetts Port Authority employee parking lot to Central Avenue and Eastern Avenue and ending at the Mystic Mall. No construction is proposed in East Boston, where the bus service will utilize existing transportation infrastructure. The project proposes to replace the Washington Street Bridge in Chelsea, relocate the Chelsea commuter rail station, and provide a shared use path and accessibility for the disabled. The proposed Silver Line Gateway route is approximately five miles long and will require eight to ten dual-mode (diesel/electric) articulated buses that will operate in mixed traffic through East Boston to Eastern Avenue in Chelsea. The route would

begin at South Station in Boston, stopping at all of the existing Silver Line stations in the Seaport District, use the Ted Williams Tunnel and stop at the Airport Blue Line Station, use the new Coughlin Bypass Road, and then cross into Chelsea via the new Chelsea Street Bridge. West of Eastern Avenue, a new busway will be constructed along MassDOT-owned right-of-way (ROW), the former Grand Junction Railway, to the Mystic Mall with new stations to be constructed at Eastern Avenue, the Box District, downtown Chelsea, and the Mystic Mall. The project will be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 will include the construction of the busway, three of the four proposed BRT stations, and replacement of the Washington Street Bridge. Phase 2 will include the construction of the downtown Chelsea BRT station, the new commuter rail station and the shared-use path, and the demolition of the existing commuter rail station. The project is included in the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization's 2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

As part of the project, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and the City of Chelsea propose to construct a shared-use path along a section of the former Grand Junction Railroad ROW with an appropriation under the Gateway Cities Parks Program, the Governor's urban parks initiative. The goal of this component of the project is to provide a linear trail from the Chelsea River waterfront to downtown Chelsea that will serve as both a transportation alternative and a recreational facility. The path will parallel the busway where it can be accommodated within and the ROW. From the downtown area, the path will utilize existing city streets. It will connect to other regional path systems including the existing East Boston Greenway, the Northern Strand Trail, and the Malden River trail system. MassDOT will coordinate with the City and EEA to ensure that the design of the Silver Line Gateway accommodates the implementation of the shared-use path.

Potential environmental impacts are associated with the creation of 4.85 acres of new impervious area, including 3.6 acres for the busway, 0.4 acres for the relocated commuter rail station, and 0.85 acres for the shared-use path and off-street elements; and 13,798 sf of alteration to Isolated Vegetated Wetlands (IVW).

Permitting and Jurisdiction

The project is undergoing MEPA review and requires preparation of a mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to 301 CMR 11.03(6)(a)(5) and (3)(b)(1)(d) because it requires a State Agency Action, entails the construction of a new rapid transit line along a new, unused or abandoned ROW for transportation of passengers, and will alter 5,000 or more square feet (sf) of IVW. The project will require a 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC) from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), Federal Consistency Review by the Office of Coastal Zone Management, and review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The project may require a Section 8(m) and Sewer Use Discharge Permits from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA).

The project will also require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit for Construction Activities from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a Section 404 General Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The

Chelsea Conservation Commission has issued a Negative Determination of Applicability for the project.

Because the Proponent is a State Agency and the project will be constructed with Financial Assistance from the Commonwealth, MEPA jurisdiction is broad in scope and extends to any aspect of the project that may, directly or indirectly, cause Damage to the Environment as defined in the MEPA regulations.

Single EIR Request

MassDOT has requested that I allow a Single EIR pursuant to 301 CMR 11.05(7). Consistent with this request, MassDOT submitted an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF) that was subject to an extended comment period of 30 days. The EENF included an alternatives analysis that was based on a comprehensive public outreach program, including four public meetings. Three separate project alternatives were identified in addition to the No Build Alternative. All three share a common routing from South Station through the Seaport District and East Boston utilizing exiting transportation facilities (South Boston Piers Transitway, Ted Williams Tunnel, MBTA Blue Line Airport Station, Coughlin Bypass Road, and the Chelsea Street Bridge). Alternative 1 (the Preferred Alternative) would end at the Mystic Mall, Alternative 2 would end at Bellingham Square partially operating on city streets, and Alternative 3 would primarily operate on existing city streets. Alternative 1 was selected as the Preferred Alternative based on public input and the travel time benefits associated with a dedicated busway.

As described in the EENF, the Silver Line Gateway project will enhance livability and promote economic development in Chelsea and East Boston by improving transit access to transit services, relieving overcrowding on existing bus routes, and relieving traffic congestion. It will include the modernization of the Chelsea Commuter Rail Station, which will be relocated to Everett Avenue as part of a new multi-modal Silver Line/Commuter Rail Station that will be fully accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additionally, the project will replace the functionally obsolete Washington Avenue Bridge, utilize abandoned railroad ROW (thereby preserving local roadway capacity), and accommodate a shared-use path (thereby encouraging walking and bicycling). The project will leverage many recent public investments such as the new Chelsea Street Bridge, the Coughlin Bypass Road in East Boston, the Airport Blue Line Station, and the purchase by MassDOT of the former Grand Junction Railroad ROW through the center of Chelsea. The project also advances a key component of the Urban Ring (EEA #12565), the goal of which is to provide circumferential transit service around the urban area of Boston. These improvements advance MassDOT's GreenDOT initiative and mode shift goals, and by converting more trips to transit, walking and bicycling, will help to reduce regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Additionally, the project will serve Environmental Justice (EJ) populations by improving their accessibility to jobs in downtown Boston and the Seaport District.

I note the comments submitted in support of the project by the City of Chelsea, A Better City (ABC), and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Based on review of the EENF and consultation with State Agencies, I hereby allow MassDOT to submit a Single EIR.

SCOPE

General

The Proponent should prepare the Single EIR in accordance with the general guidance for outline and content found in Section 11.07 of the MEPA regulations, as modified by this Scope. This Scope is limited to additional information on the on the project, provision of a wetlands replication plan, stormwater management, greenhouse gas analysis, and construction period impacts.

Project Description

The Single EIR should include a thorough description of the entire project and all project elements and construction phases, in clear non-technical language. The Single EIR should clearly describe any changes to the project since the filing of the ENF. The Single EIR should include an existing conditions plan that clearly locates and delineates project elements, wetland resource areas, and adjacent land uses. The Single EIR should include proposed conditions plans illustrating proposed cross-sections and elevations, structures, stormwater management systems, and utility connections associated with the project.

Wetlands

The project will require a 401 WQC from MassDEP for the permanent alteration of 13,798 sf of IVW along the project corridor within the abandoned ROW. The EENF demonstrates that these impacts cannot be avoided if the project is to be located in the former railroad ROW, as compared to a project alternative that would operate on existing city streets. An alternatives analysis will be required as part of the 401 WQC process, as will wetlands replication. The Single EIR should present a replication plan along with a wetlands evaluation, as requested by MassDEP in its comments.

Stormwater Management

The EENF provided a conceptual description of the stormwater management plan for the project. The Single EIR should evaluate stormwater runoff impacts during construction and post-construction in greater detail, including plans showing the design of the post-construction drainage system designed in compliance with the stormwater management regulations. The EENF indicates that most of the project will be new development; therefore, MassDOT must demonstrate in the Single EIR that the relevant sections of the wetlands regulations will be fully met. The Single EIR should also demonstrate that the pre-treatment and structural stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be met to the maximum extent practicable for the redevelopment portions of the project, as directed in MassDEP's comments.

Additionally, the Single EIR should explain how water quality and quantity impacts would be controlled in accordance with the standards in the stormwater management regulations, including source controls, pollution prevention measures, and erosion and sedimentation controls during construction. Overall, the Single EIR should demonstrate through calculations,

stormwater system design plans, BMP designs and any supporting information, that the stormwater system will provide adequate protection for wetland resources in conformance with the stormwater regulations and the NPDES permit. MassDOT should also consider implementation of low impact development (LID) techniques and integrated management practices (IMP), as noted in MassDEP's comments.

Potential Infrastructure Impacts

The MWRA prohibits the discharge of groundwater to the sanitary sewer system. Because the project would have access to storm drains, the discharge of groundwater to the sanitary sewer system associated with this project is prohibited. The Single EIR should discuss whether MassDOT intends to install gas/oil separators in any vehicle maintenance, storage or wash buildings that may be planned for the project. The Single EIR should also discuss whether the project would impact the MWRA's water and wastewater systems in the sections specified in its comments, and if so, disclose whether the project would require an 8(m) Permit.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This project is subject to review under the May 5, 2010 MEPA Greenhouse Gas Emission Policy and Protocol (GHG Policy). As a transit project intended to increase ridership and provide alternatives to driving, it may qualify for the de minimis exemption from the GHG Policy. The Single EIR should include a discussion of potential GHG emissions associated with the project to support use of the de minimis exemption. The GHG Policy requires that proponents quantify the project's GHG emissions and identify measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate these emissions. The EENF includes three alternatives for the project and indicates that Alternative 1 (Busway to Mystic Mall) will provide the greatest air quality improvements on a regional basis, as compared to the other two alternatives considered, although the difference in air quality improvements between the three project alternatives is relatively small. The project will require the operation of eight to ten dual-mode articulated buses. The Single EIR should quantify the additional GHG emissions that will be generated by the operation of these buses, which are expected to reduce traffic congestion, as compared to the No Build condition. The Single EIR should also address measures to reduce emissions associated with construction and operation, such as reducing idling of construction equipment or using alternative fuels to power construction vehicles. I encourage MassDOT to consult with the MEPA Office and the Department of Energy Resources regarding the GHG analysis prior to submission of the Single EIR.

Construction Period Impacts

The Single EIR should include a draft Construction Management Plan (CMP) describing project activities and their schedule and sequencing, site access and truck routing, and BMPs that will be used to avoid and minimize adverse environmental impacts. The CMP should address potential construction period impacts (including but not limited to land disturbance, noise, vibration, dust, odor, nuisance, vehicle emissions, construction debris, and construction-related traffic) and analyze and outline feasible measures that can be implemented to eliminate or minimize these impacts. The Single EIR should outline potential measures to address materials

management during the construction period. The Single EIR should discuss measures proposed to protect wetland resource areas during construction, and the CMP should include an erosion control component to address protection of water quality and wetlands resources. The project must comply with MassDEP's Solid Waste and Air Quality Control regulations during construction. MassDOT should note MassDEP's detailed comments regarding compliance with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP) and recycling of construction and demolition waste.

In accordance with MassDOT's GreenDOT Policy Directive, contractors will be required to install emission control devices on all off-road vehicles to reduce emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter (PM) from diesel-powered equipment. Off-road vehicles are required to use ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel (ULSD).

Mitigation and Section 61 Findings

The Single EIR should include a separate chapter on mitigation measures, which should include a summary table of all mitigation commitments as well as detailed draft Section 61 Findings for all State Agency Permits. The Section 61 Findings should describe proposed mitigation measures, contain clear commitments to mitigation and a schedule for implementation, based on the construction phases of the project, estimate the individual cost of each proposed measure, and identify parties responsible for funding and implementing the mitigation measures. The proposed Section 61 Findings will serve as the primary template for permit conditions.

Responses to Comments

The Single EIR should contain a copy of this Certificate and a copy of each comment letter received on the EENF. In order to ensure that the issues raised by commenters are addressed, the Single EIR should include a response to comments received to the extent they are within MEPA jurisdiction. This directive is not intended to and shall not be construed to enlarge the scope of the Single EIR beyond what has been expressly identified in this Certificate. I recommend that the Proponent use either an indexed response to comments format, or a direct narrative response.

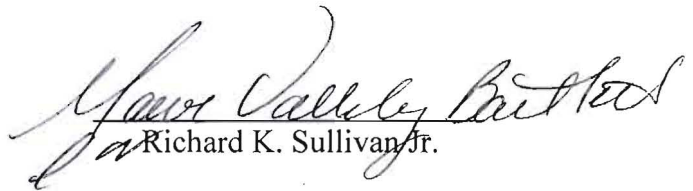
Circulation

In accordance with Section 11.16 of the MEPA Regulations and as modified by this Certificate, the Proponent should circulate a hard copy of the Single EIR to each State Agency from which the Proponent will seek permits. The Proponent must circulate a copy of the Single EIR to all other parties that submitted individual written comments. In accordance with 301 CMR 11.16(5), the Proponent may circulate copies of the Single EIR to these other parties in CD-ROM format or by directing commenters to a project website address. However, the Proponent should make available a reasonable number of hard copies to accommodate those without convenient access to a computer and distribute these upon request on a first-come, first-served basis. The Proponent should send correspondence accompanying the CD-ROM or website address indicating that hard copies are available upon request, noting relevant comment deadlines, and appropriate addresses for submission of comments. A CD-ROM copy of the

filing should also be provided to the MEPA Office. Copies of the Single EIR should be made available for review at the Chelsea and East Boston public libraries.

December 27, 2013

Date


Richard K. Sullivan Jr.

Comments received:

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| 12/16/2013 | WalkBoston |
| 12/19/2013 | George Bacon |
| 12/20/2013 | Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection |
| 12/20/2013 | Massachusetts Water Resources Authority |
| 12/20/2013 | Metropolitan Area Planning Council |
| 12/20/2013 | A Better City (ABC) |
| 12/23/2013 | Chelsea Department of Planning & Development |

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